

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
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SECDEF WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN SA  
USCINCEUR  
COMIDEASTFOR

S E C R E T SANA 2807

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: VRNT, YE  
SUBJECT: INTERNAL UNREST IN YAR

1. SUMMARY, YAR CHIEF OF STAFF REPORTS NEW ANTI-GOVERNMENT  
OUTBREAKS IN NORTHERN YAR. CONSIDERS SITUATION SERIOUS AND  
WANTS US TO EXPRESS CONCERNS TO SAUDIS. SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE  
CONFIRMS REPORT AND SAYS HE HAS APPRISED HIS GOVERNMENT. BE-  
FORE MAKING SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS I WILL ENDEAVOR TO SEE  
PRESIDENT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR AND DATT ON MORNING OF 20  
JULY, YAR DEPUTY COMMANDER  
-IN-CHIEF AND CHIEF OF STAFF LTC  
AHMAD AL-GHASHMI EXPRESSED MAJOR CONCERN OVER DETERIORATING  
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SECURITY SITUATION IN NORTHERN PORTION OF YAR. HE SAID CURRENT  
PROBLEM BEGAN LATE IN JUNE WHEN GROUP OF TRIBESMEN AFFILI-  
ATED WITH PARAMOUNT HASHID CONFEDERATION OF SHAYKH ABDULLAH  
AL-AHMAR STOLE APPROXIMATELY 5000 THOUSAND RIYALS FROM GOVERN-  
MENT CUSTOMS POINT NORTH OF CITY OF SAADA. AFTER BRIEF EX-  
CHANGE OF FIRE, GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION  
PEACEFULLY. APPROXIMATELY TWO DAYS AGO, HOWEVER, SAME GROUP

OF TRIBESMEN BEGAN HARASSING YARG SECURITY FORCES MANNING CHECKPOINT AND SITUATION HEATED UP TO POINT THAT GOVERNMENT FELT COMPELLED TO CALL IN AIRCRAFT ON 19 JULY. DURING ENSUING CLASHES TRIBES SUSTAINED NUMEROUS CASUALTIES AND YAR LOST SEVEN PERSONNEL INCLUDING LOCAL CUSTOMS CHIEF. LTC AL-GHASHMI BELIEVES SITUATION REMAINS SERIOUS (HE NOTED ROAD TO SAADA STILL CLOSED TO GOVERNMENT TRAVEL) AND SAID THAT HE AND PRESIDENT HAMDI ARE MOST CONCERNED THAT CONDITIONS WILL WORSEN.

3. ACCORDING TO AL-GHASHMI, SOVIETS AND LOCAL LEFTIST ARE EXULTING OVER RENEWAL OF STRIFE BETWEEN YARG AND NORTHERN TRIBES. HE PREDICTED THAT SOVIETS WILL EXPLOIT THESE DEVELOPMENTS TO PRESS HAMDI ONCE MORE TO ACCEPT NEW ARMS AND ADVISORY AGREEMENTS AND THAT THEY WILL DO ALL POSSIBLE TO UNDERMINE SAUDI-YEMENI RELATIONS.

4. LTC AL-GHASHMI SAID THAT YARG HAS EXPRESSED ITS CONCERNS TO SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE COLONEL SALIH AL-HUDAYAN, WHO IN ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR SUDAYRI IS RANKING SAUDI REPRESENTATIVE IN SANA. HE THINKS HIGHER LEVEL REPRESENTATIONS MAY BE NECESSARY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE YEMENI GOVERNMENT IS NOT SEEKING CONFRONTATION BUT SAUDIS MUST ALSO INTERVENE TO RESTRAIN TRIBAL ELEMENTS CHALLENGING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. HE POINTED OUT THAT DURING PRESIDENT HAMDI'S RECENT VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA (WHICH OCCURRED BEFORE THIS LATEST OUTBREAK) SENIOR SAUDIS  
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AT THE ROYAL LEVEL EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF HAMDI'S ENDEAVOR TO CONSOLIDATE GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER THE NORTH BUT MIDDLE-LEVEL FUNCTIONARIES CONTINUE TO REGARD THE NORTHERN TRIBES AS THEIR CHOSEN INSTRUMENTS IN YEMEN AND ARE EFFECTIVELY THWARTING ATTEMPTS TO BUILD A NEW AND FIRMER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RIYADH AND SANA. AT THE SAME TIME, HE OBSERVED SOMEWHAT BITTERLY, THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING AN OFFICIAL WELCOME FOR PDRY PRES. SALIM RUBAYI ALI AND ADENI OFFICIALS WHO LIE TO THEIR SAUDI HOSTS AND REMAIN COMMITTED TO OVERTHROW OF ALL MODERATE REGIMES IN THE AREA INCLUDING SAG AND YARG.

5. THE CHIEF OF STAFF URGED THAT THE U.S. INFORM SAG OF THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN NORTHERN YAR WHICH, IF UNCHECKED, MAY IMPERIL BOTH U.S. AND SAUDI INTERESTS IN THIS AREA.

6. DATT SUBSEQUENTLY TALKED WITH SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE, COL. HUDAYAN, WHO CONFIRMED THAT CLASHES HAD BEGUN YESTERDAY AND SAID YARG HAD USED FOUR MIG-17S IN SAADA AREA. HUDAYAN, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT SHAYKH ABDULLAH'S MEN WERE BEHIND ORIGINAL INCIDENTS LAST MONTH, SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE SHAYKH WAS INVOLVED IN PRESENT CLASHES. RATHER, HE THOUGHT

THEY WERE THE WORK OF SINAN ABU LUHUM, VERY LIKELY AT SOVIET INSTIGATION. THE SOVIET'S HE FELT, HAVE MOST TO LOSE FROM HAMDI'S RECENT SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS WITH SAUDI LEADERS AND ARE TRYING TO USE ABU LUHUM, ALWAYS A PLIANT TOOL OF THE LEFT, TO PLAY A SPOILING ROLE. HUDAYAN SAID HE MADE THESEPOINTS TO THE PRESIDENT THIS MORNING AND THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF THE U.S. AMBASSADOR SAW HAMDI AS WELL TO ASSURE HIM OF U.S. CONCERN AND WILLINGNESS TO HELP FIND A SOLUTION. HE SAID THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT CAN EXERT SOME INFLUENCE WITH THE TRIBES TO CALM THE SITUATION.

6. COMMENT: DURING OUR INTERVIEW THIS MORNING, LTC AL-GHASHMI WAS UNUSUALLY SERIOUS AND SUBDUED IN MANNER AND SEEKGED CLEARLY SECRET

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UPSET OVER THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND WHAT THEY MAY PORTEND. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT YARG ITSELF HAS UNDERTAKEN NEW VENTURES IN THE NORTH (SUCH AS SEPARATELY REPORTED AIRBORNE TROOP DEPLOYMENTS TO THE NAHAM-ARHAB REGION), WE ARE INCLINED TO ATTRIBUTE THIS LATEST OUTBREAK TO MOUNTING TRIBAL DISSATISFACTION WITH INCREASING SAUDI SUPPORT FOR THE CENTRAL REGIME IN YEMEN, WE HAD ALREADY HEARD THAT SHAYKH ABDULLAH HAS EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH CURRENT LEVELS OF SAUDI AID TO THE NORTHERN TRIBES (ONE SOURCE HAS GONE SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT SHAYKH ABDULLAH IS RECEIVING NO SAUDI SUPPORT AT ALL) AND THE RECENT AND REPORTEDLY SUCCESSFUL VISITS OF PRESIDENT HAMDI TO RIYADH MAY HAVE GOADED THE HASHID LEADER OR OTHER DISSIDENT TRIBESMENTO INSTIGATE FURTHER CLASHES IN AN EFFORT TO DISRUPT YEMENI-SAUDI RELATIONS. ALTERNATIVELY, HUDAYAN MAY BE CORRECT IN ATTRIBUTING THESE PROVOCATIVE ACTS TO ABU LUHUM AND BY ENTENSION TO THE SOVIETS. IN ANY CASE, WE AGREE WITH AL-GHASHMI THAT IF THIS SITUATION CONTINUES TO FESTER THE INEVITABLE WINNERS WILL BE THE USSR AND OTHER RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THIS AREA WHILE THE LOSERS WILL BE OUR MODERATE ALLIES IN SAUDI ARABIA AND YAR. WHILE WE BELIVE PRESIDENT HAMDI WILL MAKE A SERIOUS ENDEAVOR TO DAMP DOWN THE CRISIS, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THESE TENSIONS MAY BUILD UP LIKE THE LOCAL MONSOON STORMS WHICH, ONCE THEY BREAK, DO SO WITH A VENGEANCE.

7. I PLAN TO SEEK EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT HAMDI AND, IF SUCCESSFUL, WILL FOLLOW UP WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS.  
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NNN

## Message Attributes

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